Meditation - A Powerful Stress Buster in Dental Care Professionals

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Abstract

Meditation is an umbrella term that encompasses a family of practices. In state of meditation there is total relaxation of body & mind. Control of breathing & doing nothing are the basic steps. The practice of meditation creates a balanced, rhythmic & naturally flowing pulsation of life through every part of the body. It transfers the struggling- stressful & exhausted life into a peaceful one. That life is full of health, creativity, love & compassion. Such type of greatest adventure only 'human mind' can undertake. For meditation, there is no need to escape from the life. It is a simple technique that does not require sophisticated or complicated amenities.

Key words: Meditation, Relaxation, Stress freedom, Creativity, Healthy life.

Introduction

1. Current stressful life style of Dental Care Professionals:

The present scenario of life style is world of struggle. The struggle is for achieving the self image of 'perfectionist' & success in every aspect of the life. This is the root cause of rat race competition which is inevitably followed by anxiety, tension & exhaustion. The result is creation of disharmony between body and mind. The struggle in life is unending leading to an unsatisfactory, unhealthy life.

The tensions in dental care professionals are mainly physical & mental. The doctors have to perform skilful & precise work.

The uncomfortable posture has to be maintained for hours with full concentration. This leads to many health problems e.g. backache, eye strain, early fatigability, cervical spondylisis, wrist pain & others. We cannot change the current practice, but we can try to accommodate for betterment. Everybody want healthy life & “Freedom” from tensions. Meditation will help to face the tensions of life. We should not neglect our basic needs during achievement of the goal. Otherwise there will be 'paradox' in life, the basic cause of stress. We have bigger house but small families; more convenience but less time. We built computers to hold more information but less wisdom. We can communicate anybody all over the world instantly but less communication with family & neighbours. We have more degrees but less sense; more knowledge but less judgement; more experts but more problems; more medicines, but less healthiness.

2. Health & meditation

Meditation helps to relax body & mind even in the subjects who had never practiced meditation before. Meditation helps to be in present with freedom from past & future. Exercises of breathing pattern releases the tension. The practice of meditation reduces the physiological stress responses without taking away the beneficial effect of stress, e.g. improved work capacity & memory scores. Meditation creates the balance, rhythm & natural flow (Pulsation) of life through every part of body. Whenever there is interruption or disturbance in this joyful flow, disease appears. The basic root cause of poor health is stressful lifestyle, emotional conflict & mental tension. A number of physical diseases created by this are called as psycho-somatic diseases. Examples are Hypertension, Diabetes, chronic pain, Anxiety, Depression, Acidity, Backache, Migraine, Insomnia.

Meditation calm down the sympathetic system & allow the parasympathetic system to act. The harmony is established in between sympathetic & parasympathetic systems which is important to balance their functions; just like an melodious orchestra composing joyful music of life. Effects suh as slows the action of the heart, Dilates the blood vessels of the gut...
where blood flow is increased & gland secretions are increased, Muscles are relaxed, Control the blood pressure.

What is meditation?
Manocha described meditation as a discrete and well-defined experience of a state of “thoughtless awareness” or mental silence, in which the activity of the mind is minimized without reducing the level of alertness. These difficult words can be simplified by an example. In era of computer when there is coase & computer is not performing functions according to commands then what we do? we shut down the computer & restart. The same is achieved by meditation in our mind that reflects on body functions. Meditation also has been defined as a self-experience and self-realization exercise. That means doing & experiencing is must to understand meditation. Meditation is total relaxation of body &mind complex & an art of living in present moment. Meditation is an umbrella term that encompasses a family of practices.

Body & mind as an unit: Body & mind are not different from each other. Body is reflection of mind & mind is a part of body & execute through body. Naturally tensions & relaxations of mind & body reflect on each other that is body-mind complex.

Breathing: Breathing is the first action of our life sustained up to the end. The tension & relaxation changes the breathing pattern. There is fast & shallow breathing in tension & slow & deep breathing in relaxation. If we control the breathing pattern we can control the tensions & relaxation of body & mind. Thus the controlled breathing pattern is one of the ways to the meditation. Types of breathing are Abdominal type (Diaphragmatic muscle-spiritual muscle), Deep breathing, Bellows (Bhastrika)-Abdominal muscles are used, Nadishuddhi (Alternate nostril is used)


Nothing needs to be done; just be a witness, an observer. A watcher looking at the traffic of the mind without identification & consisting of thought passing by, desires, memories, dreams, fantasies. Simply stand aloof, cool, watching it, seeing it with no judgement, no identification, with no consideration, neither saying 'This is good,' nor saying 'This is bad'.

Different methods & Meditation:
1. Active method (Body oriented): Hath yoga
   In this method primarily body energy is activated. This energy helps in deep cleansing of many blocks-discomforts created by mental expression in the body. For example Eight fold path of yoga (Ashtang-yog), Dynamic meditation-Chaotic breathing catharsis, Nataraj-Dancing meditation, Kundalini, Whirling (Sufi method), Gibberish,Tai-chi, Sudarashan kriya, Laughing & crying meditation & Qi Gong.

2. Passive method(Mind oriented): Raj yoga
   This method is basically mind oriented with minimum body activity involvement. For example Chanting of mantras, Transcendental meditation, Meditation on sound/music, Tratak (Concentration method), Mirror gazing, Za Zen, Humming, Who am I, Visualization, Vipassana, Lathian, Chakra breathing, Chakra sound.

3. Heart oriented method: Bhakti yoga
   In this method heart-emotions are used. It is mainly beneficial for emotionally & devotionally inclined people. For example Kirtan-Bhajan & Prayers.

Flowering Effects of meditation: Great silence is achieved. There is feeling of unconditional love, compassion-a combination of meditation & love which is divine & spiritual. You have continuous & undisturbed abiding joy. The meditation explore the intelligence & increase the responsive ability. You get self nature-being own, absoluteness, aloneness due to inside journey- pure space of own. That is your real self, your individuality, beauty & integrity. There is increase in sensitivity, perceptibility & memory.

Conclusion
Meditation is not something new. All of us have come with it into the world. We only explore it to open our capacity for love, intimacy, creativity & expansion. All over the world people are struggling to be free from something. It may be failure in solving day to day problems like in family escape from a nagging wife, or a controlling husband, a dominating parent, or a boss at work who is quashing the creativity. It may be failure in profession or fighting against a repressive political system. Or it may be an effort to get free of own childhood conditioning through countless therapies (Sanskar). Everybody wants to be free from such struggles.

The freedom of meditation does not depend upon something outside ourselves. It is 'Just freedom'. Living in present moment; neither in memory nor the dreams of future.
control of this is in hands of meditator & not in hands of external environment. Mind is always jumping ahead or lagging behind, but it is never in the moment. This constant chattering mind robs us of life preventing from enjoying what each moment of life holds for us. Through meditation the chattering can slow down & eventually disappear. The mind becomes useful tool instead of enslaving us. However, we often confuse by countless meditation techniques. Follow any technique suitable for you. Do it. Experience it. Do not believe because it is written in books or told by someone but because you have experienced the flowering of meditation.

The deep relaxation create the required depth in silence of mind to know our real self & spiritual dimension. This experience is healthy perfectly fits into definition of health by WHO\textsuperscript{19}-Health is a state of complete well being of physical, mental, social & not merely an absence of disease or infirmity. Meditation heals the body from inside but medicine heals body from outside.\textsuperscript{15} Healthy mind & body allows you to enjoy the life without side effects of tension. Meditation - A powerful stress buster for all.

References

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